

WALSHOT
(44-52576)

SHOOTING OF GOVERNOR WALLACE AND PROSECUTION OF BREMER:

Governor George C. Wallace was shot and seriously wounded by Arthur H. Bremer at approximately 4:00 p.m., May 15, 1972, after completing an address at a political rally at the Laurel Shopping Center, in Laurel, Maryland. Other victims of the shooting included Secret Service Agent Nicholas J. Zarvos (shot through the neck, bullet lodging in his jaw), Mrs. Dora Thompson (shot in the right calf), and Captain Eldred Cole Dothard, Alabama State Police (shot superficially in the lower abdomen).

We conducted an immediate intensive investigation, which included tracing Bremer's movements months before the shooting. This investigation concluded that Bremer had acted alone and was not part of a conspiracy.

Bremer was charged by a Federal Grand Jury with four counts: 1) Willfully injuring a Presidential candidate (Title 18, Section 245, U. S. Code (USC); 2) Assault of a Federal Officer (Title 18, Section 111, USC); 3) Transportation of a firearm in interstate commerce with the intent to commit a felony (Title 18, Section 924 (B), USC); and 4) Using a firearm to commit a felony (Title 18, Section 924 (C), USC).

He was also charged in a 24-count state indictment, the most serious charge being attempted murder.

On August 4, 1972, Bremer was found guilty in a Maryland state court on nine counts including: 1) Four counts of assault to commit murder; 2) Four counts of unlawfully using a handgun to commit a felony; and 3) One count of carrying a firearm in violation of Maryland law. Bremer received sentences on these counts totaling 63 years, to be served consecutively (later reduced to a 53-year term).

Bremer unsuccessfully appealed his conviction to the Maryland State Court of Appeals and the U. S. Supreme Court refused to review his conviction. Thereafter, Federal charges were dismissed on 6/25/74 and Bremer continues to serve his sentence in the Maryland State Penitentiary.

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CONSPIRACY THEORIES:

Every effort was made during our investigation to identify all persons in contact with Bremer prior to the shooting. There has been no indication that Watergate people or any others were involved with Bremer and the media has been so advised. However, the news media continues to advance speculations of a conspiracy theory. One effort has been an attempt to implicate the "Liddy - Hunt Watergate Group" in the shooting of Wallace by suggesting in July, 1973, that a CBS news film of the Wallace shooting depicted G. Gordon Liddy near Wallace. This film and other photographs were reviewed at the Bureau and it was concluded the man shown was not Liddy.

Questions were also raised regarding testimony by E. Howard Hunt before the Senate "Watergate" Select Committee that White House Counsel Charles Colson suggested Hunt search Bremer's apartment in Milwaukee following his attack on Wallace. We have interviewed both about this and Hunt maintains he was asked by Colson to go to Milwaukee and survey Bremer's apartment but he did not go. Colson stated he called Hunt on the evening of the shooting for the sole purpose of ascertaining Hunt's evaluation of Bremer as Hunt reportedly had a background in psychological evaluation. Both men denied any involvement and stated they do not know of any involvement by others at the White House or elsewhere. Regarding alleged FBI failure to promptly "seal off" Bremer's apartment, it was already occupied by a Secret Service Agent when our Agents reached the scene, but was later "sealed" when the White House ordered the FBI to assume complete control of the investigation.

The Director has previously responded to specific questions about our WALSHOT investigation and media speculations on conspiracy in a 1/21/75 letter to Jack Nelson, Chief, Washington Bureau, "Los Angeles Times." Since questions similar to those from Nelson may also be raised by the CBS representatives during discussions with the Director, there is attached for ready reference the 1/15/75 memorandum setting out questions from Nelson and our response.